Intermontanus

Published by the Utah Association of Herpetologists

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In the early 1970's a group of Utah herpetologists formed the Utah Herpetologists' League. At that time, few Utahans had an interest in herpetology and the league consisted of a handful of members. Consequently the Utah Herpetologists' League was only active for a few years. There was an attempt to restore the League in the mid 1980's. This attempt failed because many members used the league as a market to buy, sell and trade animals despite rules prohibiting bringing animals to meetings.

Since the mid 1980's the number of amateur herpetologists in the state has increased considerably. Undoubtedly, Zooherp Inc. is responsible for much of this increased interest in amphibians and reptiles. So once again an attempt is being made to unite the herpetologists of Utah.

This formation is particularly timely because the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR) has recently created the position of State Herpetologist. This position was filled by David A. Ross. As State Herpetologist, David will be examining the status of Utah's amphibian and reptile species, prioritizing and implementing management plans, and re-evaluating the amphibian and reptile laws, among other duties.

The goals of the Utah Association of Herpetologists (UtAH) include: creating a forum for communication between the professional, amateur, and state herpetologists of Utah; promoting the study and conservation of amphibians and reptiles in Utah; establishing a data base of information on Utah herpetology; and disseminating knowledge of herpetology to members and the public.

To realize these goals, the association will publish the *Intermontanus* bimonthly. The *Intermontanus* will function to disseminate information on both Utah herpetofauna and captive care and maintenance of amphibians and reptiles as well as notify members of upcoming events, legislation and news. In addition to the *Intermontanus* the association will sponsor meetings, lectures, reptile shows, and surveys of local herpetofauna for member participation. David Ross has also suggested that the UtAH interact and converse with the UDWR on herpetological issues.

Membership in UtAH is open to anyone interested in herpetology. Members will receive *Intermontanus* (published bimonthly) and are qualified to hold a seat on the UtAH board. A member may be denied further participation in UtAH events if their actions are not in accordance with association goals or rules and there is a two-thirds majority vote to suspend said privileges.

The association's first meeting is planned for 5:00 pm Thursday, 5 March 1992. The meeting will be held in conjunction with the Wildlife Society's meeting at the Park Hotel in Ogden. This first meeting will consist of two presentations. Future meetings will be held in Salt Lake City.

To join send $7.00 to: Utah Association of Herpetologists, 195 West 200 North, Logan, Utah 84321-3905.

Letter From David A. Ross, UDWR State Herpetologist

Dear Mr. Bartholomew,

I wholeheartedly support the formation of a "[Utah Association of Herpetologists" (UtAH)]. Such a society would certainly enhance communication among those persons interested in the conservation of Utah's amphibians and reptiles. Utah has a diverse and interesting herpetile fauna, and I am excited about the possibilities that exist here.

I would encourage the [UtAH] to interact and communicate not only with the Utah Department of Natural Resources but with other agencies as well. These agencies could include, but would certainly not be limited to, the Bureau of Reclamation, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

I suggest that an organizational meeting be held concurrently with The Wildlife Society meetings which will be held march 4-6, 1992 at the Park Hotel in Ogden. This will increase the involvement of other natural Resource professionals from other agencies and concerns. I believe it will also strengthen the credibility of the [UtAH] to have resource professionals as members. I will be more than willing to reserve a room at this meeting. Enclosed are the Certificate of Registration materials for the Adopt-A-Tortoise Program you requested.

I look forward to the organizational meeting.

Sincerely,
David A. Ross

FEATURES

A Checklist of the Amphibians and Reptiles of Natural Bridges National Monument

Amphibians

Salamanders

Tiger Salamander (*Ambystoma tigrinum*) - Uncommon to rare. Breeds in the spring in pools in the canyons. Larvae may be found in pools; adults spend most of their time in rodent burrows or under surface litter.

Frogs and Toads

New Mexico Spadefoot Toad (*Spea multiplicata*) - Common. Found throughout the monument. Breeds in pools after spring and summer rains.

Woodhouse's Toad (*Bufo woodhousii*) - Uncommon. Found throughout the monument. Breeds in pools in the canyons and on the mesatop after summer rains.

Red-spotted Toad (*Bufo punctata*) - Common. Found throughout the monument, especially in the canyons where it breeds in pools.

Canyon Treefrog (*Hyla arenicolor*) - Common. Found in slickrock areas in the canyon bottoms.

Northern Leopard Frog (*Rana pipiens*) - Rare. Found in permanent pools in the larger canyons.

Reptiles

Lizards

Short-horned Lizard (*Phrynosoma douglassii*) - Common. Found on the mesatop, but hard to spot. Often found in the vicinity of anthills, where it feeds.

Collared Lizard (*Crotaphytus collaris*) - Uncommon. Found in rocky areas on the mesatop and on the canyon rims. Look for this colorful lizard at the bridge views along the loop drive.

Side-blotched Lizard (*Uta stansburiana*) - Uncommon. Restricted to open slickrock areas, mostly on the canyon rims. Near the Kachina Bridge trailhead is the most reliable spot.

Tree Lizard (*Urosaurus ornatus*) - Common. Found throughout the monument, usually on rocks (only occasionally on trees).

Eastern Fence Lizard (*Sceloporus undulatus*) - Common. Found on the

mesatop in the vicinity of rock outcrops, and throughout the canyons.

Sagebrush Lizard (*Sceloporus graciosus*) - Common. The most commonly observed lizard on the mesatop, but found in the canyons as well.

Desert Night Lizard (*Xantusia vigilis*) - Rare. One record from near Kachina Bridge. The status of this very secretive, tiny lizard is unclear in the monument.

Plateau Striped Whiptail (*Cnemidophorus velox*) - Common. Found in all habitats throughout the monument.

Snakes

Striped Whipsnake (*Masticophis taeniatus*) - Rare. Most reports have been from the mesatop, but probably occurs in the canyons as well.

Gopher Snake (*Pituophis catenifer* [= *melanoleucus*]) - Common. Found in all habitats throughout the monument.

Glossy Snake (*Arizona elegans*) - Rare. One sight record from eastern part of monument. Little is known about this secretive snake at Natural Bridges. [*see herpetological notes*]

Night Snake (*Hypsiglena torquata*) - Uncommon to rare. Only a few records of this small nocturnal snake. May be more common than believed.

Western Rattlesnake (*Crotalus viridis*) - Common. The most commonly observed snake in the monument. Found in all habitats, but most common on the mesatop. Venomous, but has a mild temperament. Adults at Natural Bridges rarely exceed two feet in length.

Hypothetical species - Species which have not been recorded at Natural Bridges, but because they occur nearby and in similar habitat may possibly occur. Many-lined Skink (*Eumeces multivirgatus*); Milksnake (*Lampropeltis triangulum*); Common Kingsnake (*Lampropeltis getula*); Corn Snake (*Elaphe guttata*); Smooth Green Snake (*Opheodrys vernalis*); Blackneck Garter Snake (*Thamnophis cyrtopsis*); and Western Terrestrial Garter Snake (*Thamnophis elegans*).

I have not attempted to deal with subspecies in this checklist, which at times can become somewhat of a mess, particularly with the western rattlesnake. For information on subspecies, as well as identification, consult the following books: Amphibians of North America by Hobart M. Smith (Golden Press, 1978); Reptiles of North America by Hobart M. Smith and Edmund D. Brodie, Jr. (Golden Press, 1982); and A Field Guide to western Reptiles and Amphibians, 2nd edition, by Robert C. Stebbins (Houghton Mifflin, 1985). The last one, which is one of the Peterson Field Guide series, is by far the best guide to identification and focuses on habits and habitats much more than the first two.

Submitted by **Trevor Persons**, 9 Peters Street, Orono, ME 04473

Editor's note: Since this checklist was written a desert spiny lizard (*Sceloporus magister*) was found at the monument visitor center. Trevor believes this lizard to have been transported to the park by a visitor. The editor has seen this species within 15 miles of the monument and believes this species should be placed on the "hypothetical species" list until it is confirmed within the monument.

Scientific Nomenclature of Utah Amphibians and Reptiles

In Recent Years, the scientific names of several species of amphibians and reptiles have been changed, including several Utah species. The following is a list of the new names for species that occur in Utah based on Collins (1990), except where noted otherwise.

Amphibians: formerly the Pacific Treefrog (*Hyla regilla*) now the Pacific Chorus Frog (*Pseudacris regilla*); Plains Spadefoot, formerly *Scaphiopus bombifrons* now *Spea bombifrons*; Great Basin Spadefoot, formerly *Scaphiopus intermontanus* now *Spea intermontana*; New Mexico Spadefoot, formerly *Scaphiopus multiplicatus* now *Spea multiplicata*.

Reptiles: Texas Spiny Softshell, formerly *Trionyx spiniferus emoryi* now *Apalone spinifera emoryi*; the Variable Skink (*Eumeces multivirgatus gaigeae*) should actually be *Eumeces multivirgatus epipleurotus* (Mecham 1980); formerly the Western Smooth Green Snake (*Opheodrys vernalis blanchardi*) now Smooth Green Snake (*Opheodrys vernalis*, no subspecies recognized); Great Basin Gopher Snake, formerly *Pituophis melanoleucus deserticola* now *Pituophis catenifer deserticola*, data supporting this nomenclatural change is apparently lacking and it is unlikely that the change will be widely accepted.

The scientific names of a few other species have been corrected, as required by the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature (Frost and Collins 1988). The correct scientific names for these species are (underline indicates the change): the Pale Leopard Lizard, *Gambelia wislizenii punctata*; the common kingsnake, *Lampropeltis getula*; and the Spotted Night Snake, *Hypsiglena torquata ochrorhynchus*.

A few other names were changed years ago, but many people have not heard of these changes. The Ground Snake (*Sonora semiannulata*) no longer has any recognized subspecies and the Blackhead snake that occurs in Utah is *Tantilla hobartsmithi* not *T. utahensis* or *T. planiceps*. The Mojave Zebratail Lizard is *Callisaurus draconoides rhodostictus* not *C. d. draconoides*. Finally, the Desert Tortoise is still *Gopherus agassizii* not *Xerobates agassizii*.

Collins, J. T. (1990). Standard Common and Scientific Names for North American Amphibians and Reptiles. 3rd ed. SSAR Herpetol. Cir. No. 19.

Frost, D. R. and J. T. Collins (1988). Nomenclatural notes on reptiles of the United States. Herpetol. Rev. 19(4):73-74.

Mecham, J.S. (1980) *Eumeces multivirgatus* (Hallowell) Many-lined skink. SSAR Catalogue of American Amphibians and Reptiles. No. 241.

CAPTIVE CARE

Inexpensive Ways to incubate Reptile eggs

Successful incubation of eggs is one of the primary obstacles faced by reptile breeders. There are many inexpensive and easy ways to successfully incubate eggs. Two such ways are described here.

The first incubator was tested on six Texas spiny softshell (*Apalone spinifera emoryi*) eggs. The eggs were placed in approximately three inches of sand in a plastic Tupperware box. The top of each egg was left uncovered and the sand was

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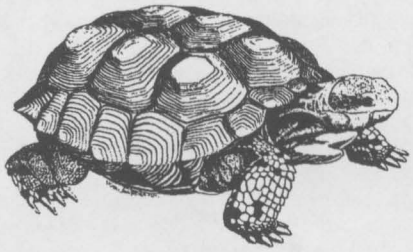

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kept damp. The lid of the box was in place, but not fastened. This allowed gas exchange and maintained high relative humidity. The box was placed on a board (1" x 6" x 12") which was on top of a heating pad set on low. A constant temperature of about 28°c was maintained by adding additional wood if the temperature increased or removing it if the temperature decreased. Five of the six eggs hatched 70 days after they were laid. The sixth egg was eventually opened. It contained a well developed embryo.

A variation on this technique is to install an adjustable (dimmer) light switch on the heating pad chord. This allows enhanced temperature control without the use of wood (and it saves electricity too). This type of modified heating pad also works well as a heat source for cages.

The second incubator was tested with five western yellowbelly racer (*Coluber constrictor mormon*) eggs and four eastern milksnake (*Lampropeltis t. triangulum*) eggs. The eggs were placed on a moist paper towel that was inside an aluminum pie plate. A second moist paper towel was placed on top of the eggs. The pie plate was placed in 1/2 inch of tepid water, inside a plastic storage box. The lid of the box was loosely attached. The incubator was placed in the warmest room in the house. No heat source was provided. The paper towels were replaced weekly, but the water was never replaced. All of the eggs hatched successfully.

These are just two ways to incubate reptile eggs. If you know of other inexpensive ways to incubate reptile eggs, or if you have any hints for the captive care of amphibians and/or reptiles, please write a note describing them and submit it for publication in *Intermontanus*.

Addenda to State Law R608-3 Collection, Importation, Transportation and Subsequent Possession of Zoological Animals

The following mistakes have been found in state law R608-3 Collection, Importation, Transportation and Subsequent Possession of Zoological Animals.

R608-3-6 (B)(5)(b)(ii): the following species should be deleted (as they are already accounted for under R608-3-6 (B)(5)(b)(i)): Chuckwalla, Iguanidae, *Sauromalus obesus*; Common zebra-tailed lizard, Iguanidae, *Callisaurus draconoides draconoides*; Desert iguana, Iguanidae, *Dipsosaurus dorsalis*; Common night lizard, Xantusidae, *Xantusia vigilis vigilis*: Utah night lizard, Xantusidae, *Xantusia vigilis utahensis*; and Utah banded gecko, Gekkonidae, *Coleonyx variegatus utahensis*.

The following species should be added to R608-3-6 (B)(5)(b)(ii): Great Basin collared lizard, Iguanidae, *Crotaphytus insularis bicinctores*; Yellow-headed collared lizard, Iguanidae, *Crotaphytus collaris auriceps*, Northern desert horned lizard, Iguanidae, *Phrynosoma platyrhinos platyrhinos*; Southern desert horned lizard, Iguanidae, *Phrynosoma platyrhinos calidiarum*.

Note: the UDWR has been notified of these changes, but this addenda was prepared by UtAH and is not legally binding in any way.

Herpetological Notes

***Arizona elegans philipi* (Painted Desert Glossy Snake) Distribution:** On 20 April 1991 a snake was seen at a den in Natural Bridges National Monument, San Juan Co. UT. The snake was not captured and was identified as *Arizona elegans philipi* based on a short glance. It is possible that the snake was actually an *Elaphe guttata emoryi* (Great Plains Rat Snake) or a very large *Hypsiglena torquata loreala* (Mesa Verde Night Snake). Two *H. t. loreala* were found at the den during the spring of 1991. Neither *A. e. philipi* nor *E. g. emoryi* have ever been found within approximately 50 miles of Natural Bridges National Monument. The presence of *A. e. philipi* within the monument deserves further study and verification.

Submitted by **Trevor Persons**, 9 Peters Street, Orono, ME 04473 and **Breck Bartholomew**, Biology Department, Utah State University, Logan UT 84322-5305

***Callisaurus draconoides rhodostictus* (Mojave Zebratail Lizard) Behavior:** During September 1991 two *Callisaurus draconoides rhodostictus* were found under unusual circumstances. The first lizard was found while road cruising the old highway 91 across the Beaver Dam Slope. The lizard was lying on the road at 10:05 pm. When touched, the lizard ran about ten feet then flattened its body against the road again. The lizard was quite cold and easily caught by hand. Smith (1946, Handbook of Lizards. Comstock Publishing Co., Ithaca, NY.) suggested nocturnal activity in these lizards may be "caused simply by some unusual disturbance after the lizards have burrowed under the sand to rest." Whether this lizard had been disturbed is unknown. This lizard was cold and appeared to be using the road to thermoregulate.

The second *C.d. rhodostictus* was found quite by accident. It was about 7:00 am when I stopped in to collect some gravel to use for photography. The gravel looked completely undisturbed, but with the first scoop of dirt came an adult *C.d. rhodostictus*. Needless to say I was almost as surprized as the lizard. The lizard was very cold so I placed it under a bush in the sun. When I left the Lizard had moved to another bush.

Submitted by **Breck Bartholomew**, Department of Biology, Utah State University, Logan UT 84322-5305

Classified Ads

Wanted: Female coastal rosy boa(s) (*Lichanura trivirgata roseofusca*), and adult Burmese pythons (*Python molurus bivittatus*), either sex. Call Breck @ 801-752-0297.

Wanted: Articles, notes, or essays about amphibians or reptiles for publication in *Intermontanus*. Send to: Utah Association of Herpetologists', 195 West 200 North, Logan, Utah 84321-3905.

Classified ads are run free for UtAH members and 50 cents per line for non-members.

Utah Association of Herpetologists

Chairman: (to be elected by board)
Board members: Breck Bartholomew
Stan Draper
James A. MacMahon
Louis Porras

Intermontanus
Editor: Breck Bartholomew (assistants needed)

All board members and editors are volunteers.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Utah Association of Herpetologists Meeting:

Time: 5:00 pm, Thursday, March 5, 1992

Place: The Park Hotel, Ogden

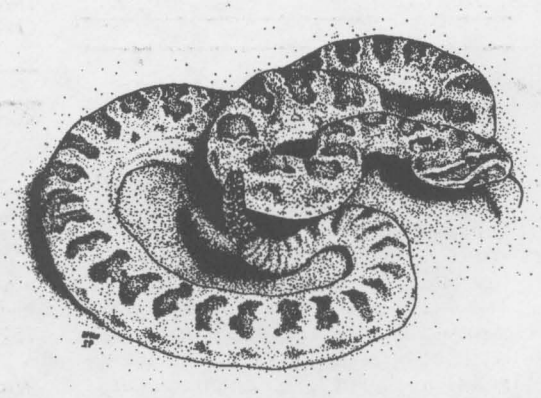
Agenda: 5:00 A Brief History of Utah Herpetology with suggestions for the role of the Utah Association of Herpetologists. Presented by Breck Bartholomew

5:30 Topic undecided but something about captive care or propagation. Presented by Stan Draper

ADDITIONAL NOTES:

If you have any herpetological information that you would like to share with UtAH members, please submit it for publication. We would like to publish a variety of things; from research to experiences with herps and artwork. It would be especially nice to hear from the many amateur herpetologists about their experiences. In addition, if you have questions or need information about any herpetological topic or species, let us know and we'll try to track down someone that has an answer.

Don't forget to join UtAH!



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